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LT. GEN. SYED ASIM MUNIR

IMRAN-BAITER ASIM MUNIR APPOINTED PAK ARMY CHIEF

Lt Gen Munir is a former top spy, having served as chief of the Inter-Services Intelligence and the Military Intelligence | P9,12

WILL TAKE CHARGE BY THE END OF THIS MONTH

However, his stint as the spy chief at the ISI was the shortest ever as he was replaced by Lt Gen Faiz Hamid within eight months on the insistence of then-prime minister Imran Khan in 2019. Munir will take up the most powerful position in the coup-prone country following Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa's retirement on November 29 after two consecutive three-year terms

UNLIKELY TO BREACH CEASEFIRE WITH INDIA

- Pakistan President Arif Alvi, who was earlier associated with Imran's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, flew to Lahore to meet the former cricketer to hold consultation on the appointment
- According to experts, Munir is unlikely to breach the ceasefire pact with India as his focus will be sorting out domestic issues

Pulwama

MUNIR WAS THE I.S.I. CHIEF WHEN THE 2019 TERROR ATTACK TOOK PLACE

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Families meet ex-Navy officers in Qatar custody

Embassy seeking further consular access

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

FAMILIES of some of the eight former naval officers detained in Qatar since August-end have been able to meet them, though there is no word yet on their release. There are also reports suggesting that relatives of the others in custody have been asked to fly to Doha from India to meet them.

On Thursday, families of the eight former officers got to interact with Indian envoy Deepak Mittal at a 'Meet the Ambassador Open House' session organised by the Indian Embassy in Doha. While some of them met him in person, others got to speak to him online.

"Only family members were permitted to ask questions and on a one-on-one basis. The details of course have been kept under wraps. Indian Ambassador to Qatar Dr Deepak Mittal spoke with them. Queries by those other than the family members were not addressed," sources said.

The Indian Embassy in Doha had issued a circular earlier saying they would be ready to listen/redress any urgent consular issues or grievances of Indian nationals in Qatar.

It has been close to three months since the eight former naval officers were taken into custody by the State Security Bureau (Ministry of Interior, Qatar). There is hope but no clarity on when these officers will be repatriated to India.

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar's visit to Doha on the invitation of the Qatar government to attend the inaugural ceremony of FIFA 2022 had raised hopes of the release of these eight ex-officers. Though Dhankar did have a private audience with the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, there is no clarity on whether he raised it with him.

The meeting wasn't structured, according to the Ministry of External Affairs.

India's embassy is regularly raising the matter with the Qatari authorities and seeking further consular access. It has also flagged the issue of fugitive Islamist Zakir Naik with Qatar but the country clarified that it had not issued an invite to him, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.

Appeal by family

Ex-commander Purnendu Tiwari is among the eight officers held captive in Qatar. His sister Dr Meetu Bhargava has appealed to the PM to bring back her brother

State govt finally hands over M'luru blast case to NIA

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

THE state government has handed over the November 19 Mangaluru blast case to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) after the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, were invoked.

TNIE, on November 23 had first reported that the Mangaluru blast case in which the prime accused Mohd Shariq, who was carrying the pressure cooker IED in an autorickshaw was injured along with the auto driver Purushottam Poojary following a blast, will be handed over to the NIA after the UAPA was invoked.

As per procedure, the state government on Thursday wrote to the Home Ministry stating that based on the investigation in the case (119/2022) including the examination of materials recovered and evidence collected so far by the police, Sections 16, 38 and 39 of the UAPA on punishment for committing a terrorist act, being a member of a terrorist organisation and intention to further the activity of a terrorist organisation, have been invoked. "And since, this (UA(P)A) was a scheduled offence, which falls under Section 6 of the NIA Act the matter has been submitted to the MHA for necessary and further action," informed sources told TNIE.

The Mangaluru blast case was registered under Explosive Substances Act and Sections 419, 465, 471, 120(B) and 307 of the Indian Penal Code for punishment for cheating by personation, forgery, fraudulently and dishonestly using a forged document or electronic record as genuine and attempt to murder along with sections of the UA(P)A by the Kankanady Town police station.

The NIA was roped into the investigation from day one of the investigation because of the nature of the blast.

Meanwhile, Shariq continues to be in the ICU and is still not in a condition to give any statement to the police.

Little-known outfit claims responsibility

A little-known outfit, Islamic Resistance Council (IRC), has reportedly claimed responsibility for the Mangaluru blast that injured two persons, including the prime suspect Mohammed Shariq P4

HIGH FIVE

Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo became the first man to score in five World Cups when he converted a penalty against Ghana in Doha on Thursday. Portugal won 3-2 | AP

All-party meeting next week on K'taka-Maha border row: Bommai

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru/Belagavi

CHIEF Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Thursday said all issues related to the border row with Maharashtra, including Maharashtra Chief Minister's remarks on resolving it amicably through talks, will be discussed at the all-party leaders' meeting next week.

Bommai said they have taken note of Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde holding meetings to discuss the border row and his remarks about talks and all these developments will be discussed during the meeting that he has convened next week. "They have filed the case in the Supreme Court and we are fully prepared to present our arguments. We have strong grounds," he said.

Bommai said a decision to fight the case in Supreme Court was taken at an all-party meeting and in the Border Development Authority and now the government is only focussed on presenting its arguments before the SC.

The CM said the border dispute is over after the States Reorganization Act was enacted, but the Maharashtra government is raking it up. "The resolution of Gram Panchayat (in the border area) and other related issues are with us. All these will be debated in the Supreme Court," the CM said.

A day after Bommai and Maharashtra Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis sparred over the boundary dispute between both states, Shinde said the dispute should be resolved through discussions. Shinde said the Maharashtra government held a meeting with regard to the boundary issue recently. "The issue should be resolved through talks and that has been the Maharashtra government's stand," he said.

They (Maharashtra) have filed a case in the Supreme Court and we are fully prepared to present our arguments.
Basavaraj Bommai, Chief Minister

On Wednesday, Fadnavis had tweeted, "Not even a single village from Maharashtra will go to Karnataka. The Maharashtra government will fight in the Supreme Court to claim Belagavi, Karwar, Nipani and other Marathi areas on the border."

In response, Bommai reacted on Twitter, stating that Fadnavis issued provocative statements with on the boundary dispute. Fadnavis' dreams will never come true. Karnataka state is committed to protecting its land, water and borders."

Shinde recalled the meeting that the governors of Karnataka and Maharashtra held recently in which the issue of boundary dispute also was discussed and said even the Centre too had shown a satisfactory response to the issue.

NAMMA METRO

Whitefield to KR Puram stretch to open by mid-March

S LALITHA @ Bengaluru

THE much-awaited Metro line between Whitefield and Baiyappanahalli (Reach-1 extension) is set for launch in two phases, with the 13-km stretch between Whitefield and KR Puram to be operational by mid-March 2023. The need to erect steel girders (bridge) above the railway crossing before Baiyappanahalli depot, has ensured that this small 2.5-km segment will not be ready for launch any time soon.

Testing and commissioning of the completed portion between Whitefield and Garudacharpalya is on at present.

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) Managing Director Anjum Parwez told TNIE, "We will be extending testing and commissioning works between Whitefield and Garudarcharpalya by two more stations till KR Puram. BMRCL will be in a position to operate trains from Whitefield to KR Puram by mid-March next year. We are looking at inviting the commissioner of Metro Rail Safety for inspection by February."

This 13-km stretch will have 12 Metro stations: Whitefield, Channasandra, Kadugodi, Pattandur Agrahara, Sadarmangala, Nallurhalli, Kundalahalli, Sitharama Palya, Hoodi Junction, Garudacharpalya, Saraswati Nagar and KR Puram. P2

Modern edu & dress code in madrasas

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

THE Uttarakhand Waqf Board on Thursday announced the introduction of NCERT syllabus and modern school uniform instead of the traditional *kurta-pyjama*, in madrasas run by it from next academic year. Clerics, however, criticised the radical shift in the dress code, calling it an attack on the madrasa education culture.

"NCERT syllabus and dress code will be implemented in madrasas under the Waqf Board in Uttarakhand from the next academic session," Waqf Board chairman Shadab Shams told this newspaper. "Initially, seven out of the 103 madrasas managed by the Uttarakhand Waqf Board will be run as modern schools. Children of other religions, too, can join them," he said.

In the first phase, two madrasas each in Dehradun, Udham Singh Nagar and Haridwar and one in Nainital district have been selected for the revamp. The new system will be extended to other madrasas by and by. "It is certain that the culture of *lungi, tehmat* or *kurta-pyjama* in madrasas will not work in future," he added.

Guj judge not on collegium transfer list

SHRUTI KAKKAR @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court collegium on Thursday appeared to have held back its proposal to transfer Gujarat High Court judge Nikhil S Kariel to the Patna High Court following concerns last week over ad hoc shifting in the higher judiciary.

Justice Kariel was among three judges — the other two were from the Telangana and Madras high courts — who were proposed to be transferred. The transfer of the other two judges — Justice T Raja from Madras HC to Rajasthan HC and Justice A Abhishek Reddy from Telangana HC to Patna HC — was formalised at the collegium meeting. In all, proposals to transfer seven high court judges were recommended (see table).

Name of judge	HC from	HC to
V M Velumani	Madras	Calcutta
Battu Devanand	AP	Madras
D Ramesh	AP	Allahabad
Lalitha Kanneganti	Telangana	Karnataka
Dr D Nagarjun	Telangana	Madras
T Raja	Madras	Rajasthan
A Abhishek Reddy	Telangana	Patna

When news broke on November 17 on the proposed transfer of the three judges citing administrative reasons, Bar associations in Gujarat and Telangana were voceferous in their protests immediately. The Tamil Nadu Bar association lodged its protest a day later.

The Gujarat High Court Advocates Association called it a death knell to the independence of the judiciary and announced indefinite abstention from work.

Jama Masjid bans entry of girls, revokes fiat after flak

ASHISH SRIVASTAVA @ New Delhi

DELHI's iconic Jama Masjid on Thursday issued an order prohibiting the entry of unaccompanied girls into the mosque complex but withdrew it later following public outrage and the intervention of Delhi Lieutenant-Governor V K Saxena.

"Jama Masjid *mein ladki ya ladkiyon ka akele daakhla mana hai* (solitary entry of girl or girls is not permitted in Jama Masjid)," read the order, pasted on the entrance gates of the 17th century Mughal-era mosque that attracts thousands of devotees as well as tourists.

The decree drew the ire of gender activists who termed it regressive. Later, Shahi Imam Syed Ahmed Bukhari withdrew the order after Delhi L-G Saxena requested him. "We have removed the notice boards. But people visiting the mosque have to maintain its sanctity," Bukhari said. The mosque committee, however, sought to justify the order saying it was issued to prevent "improper" and "vulgar" acts done by youngsters in the mosque complex.

EXPRESS READ

Campaign against untouchability to be launched in December

Bengaluru: With an aim to create awareness against untouchability, the state government is all set to launch 'Vinaya Samarasya' campaign in the second week of December, said Minister for Social Welfare Kota Srinivas Poojary. He said the campaign will be launched at the Gram Panchayat level across the state | P4

Outgoing Mysuru VC appoints himself visiting prof

Mysuru: Prof Hemantha Kumar, VC, University of Mysore, who demitted office after his 4-year term expired on November 14, had issued a recommendation order appointing himself as a visiting professor post-retirement.

State govt tells ailing cadet's mother to return salary

PRAMODKUMAR VAIDYA @ Hubballi

AN ailing NDA cadet's mother, who works as a headmistress in a government high school, has been asked by the state government to remit the salary she availed when she was on leave to care of her son.

Kishan Kulkarni, the only son of Bharati Joshi, was training at National Defence Academy (NDA), Pune in July 2020, when he fell sick. Initially, Bharati was not allowed to accompany him as the Covid-19 was at its peak. Eventually, when she was allowed to meet Kishan in December 2020, she took leave till April 2022.

Alhough the headmistress aproved her leave by following the rules and also apprised her higher-ups in the Education Department, questions are now being raised over the leave sanctioned as well as the salary drawn by her during that period. As per a letter sent by the office of the Accountant General, she took 40 days of commuted leave and 90 days of earned leave between December 12, 2020 and April 13, 2021.

However, 360 days availed by her as Child Care Leave from April 13, 2021 to April 7, 2022 has come under scanner as the AG's office has questioned the authority under which such leave was sanctioned and also sought details on recovery and remittance of the excess amount drawn between January 1, 2021 and April 7, 2022. P5

Kishan Kulkarni

This is heartless indeed. Hope we can do something for the family..
General (retd) VP Malik, former Army chief